Memorial: Captain Frank W. Spencer

We are assembled here today to honor and commemorate our friend and companion Captain Frank W. Spencer—and in our gathering here to honor him we thus honor ourselves. Out of respect for his wishes and in echo of the spirit of his life this memorial will be simple and direct—a eulogy, a reading of some poems, and a moment of silent prayer.

Dr. Robert Strozier
Professor of English
Armstrong State College
MEMORIAL EULOGY

Captain Frank W. Spencer spent nigh unto a hundred years in service to mankind. He labored here and worked along this rolling river where he made his home, beside the land he loved so well. The memory of his innumberable contributions to the economic, political, and social welfare of the people of Savannah and the surrounding area are cherished here and the marks he made upon the progress of our fair city will long remain.

We, the blacks, of the citizenry of Savannah, hold him in high esteem and love, with special pride. He stood, a stalwart, braced against the odds, in his relentless fight for political rights and educational opportunities for people of our race. A dauntless warrior and lover of mankind.

One author states "the evil that men do lives after them, but the good is oft interred with their bones". I entreat you here assembled to treat this thought as a lie.

Captain Spencer has passed the torch of human equality and decency from his generation to our own. Let us be as diligent for posterity as he has been with us.

What mortal's this who takes great courage home?
To fight no more nor earth's fierce paths to roam.
God bid his light of truth continue to abound
That those who grope and toil in darkness may be found.
Let truth transcent the veil of ignorance
Let not the good of life be left to chance.
The mem'ry of his pride must dare remain
The strength of youth, posterity sustain.

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Peace be unto thy spirit Captain-- - - -

Peace be within thy home.

Henderson Formey
Ex. Assistant Superintendent
Chatham County Schools
That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the deathbed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

— William Shakespeare

From "Ode on Intimations of Immortality"

1

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore—
Turn whereso'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

2

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

— William Wordsworth
"Do not go gentle ..."

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

--Dylan Thomas

From You Can't Go Home Again

Thus we have come to the end of the road that
we were to go together. My tale is finished--and so
farewell.

But before I go, I have just one more thing to tell
you:

Something has spoken to me in the night, burning the
tapers of the waning year; something has spoken in the
night, and told me I shall die, I know not where. Saying:

"To lose the earth you know, for greater knowing; to
lose the life you have, for greater life; to leave the friends
you loved, for greater loving; to find a land more kind than
home, more large than earth --

"--Whereon the pillars of this earth are founded, toward
which the conscience of the world is tending—a wind is
rising, and the rivers flow."

..Thomas Wolfe
"SEA FEVER"

I must go down to the seas again, to the
lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer
her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and
the white sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face and a gray
dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call
of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not
be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white
clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume,
and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again to the
vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where
the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing
fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the
long trick's over.

-----John Masefield

"...the last voyage, the longest, the best."

Thomas Wolfe